

Freedom from Hunger-Integrating Health and Microfinance, Andes Region
UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health, University of North Carolina

Role: Research Intern to be based in Lima, Peru with some work like to take place in Ecuador (to be determined)

Project Lead: Freedom from Hunger Technical Advisor, Andrea Del Granado

Project Stipend: \$2,500. Student is responsible for his/her own transportation to/from Peru and living expenses in Lima.

Project Period: Approximately 10-12 weeks between May and August 2012, exact dates negotiable

Freedom from Hunger is partnering with Oikocredit to expand health protection services with five microfinance institutions in Peru and Ecuador. The two-phase project began in May of 2011 and will run through November 2012. The initiative is supporting the development and integration of services such as health education, health financing (including health loans, health savings and health micro-insurance) and linkages to public and private health providers. Microfinance institution partners have participated in product planning workshops to design cohesive health packages and will begin training staff for the roll-out of the services in early 2012. Program monitoring will include reporting on key indicators of product take-up and performance, and other research will be conducted to evaluate changes in client health knowledge, health behaviors, and improved access to health care services.

Intern Qualifications

The following skills will be necessary to deliver project goals:

1. Familiarity with public health, and particularly international health, likely achieved through progress towards a masters or doctoral degree in public health
2. Familiarity with microfinance
3. Familiarity with health program monitoring and evaluation, preferred
4. Spanish fluency in speaking, reading and writing
5. Experience with interviewing and collecting, reviewing, organizing and analyzing data and information
6. Excellent writing skills, sufficient to deliver detailed, understandable, and accurate final project report
7. Proficiency with Microsoft Word, Excel, and with internet searches and communication
8. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
9. Ability to work independently and in teams
10. Experience with and comfortable with living in and working in foreign cultures and locations.

Background

For poor families in the Andean region, health concerns are paramount while reliable access to quality health care is uncertain. Meanwhile, many MFIs in Peru and Ecuador are interested in diversification of their product mix (such as microloans and savings accounts) to increase client loyalty. Research on Freedom from Hunger's [Microfinance and Health Protection](#) (MAHP) program has shown that microfinance clients and their families can benefit from access to health protection services and these services can be provided at a low cost to the MFI while building client loyalty.

Over the past several years, Oikocredit and Freedom from Hunger have developed a strong working relationship to promote the development of a microfinance sector in Peru and Ecuador that provides social value to MFI clients. Together and separately, we have worked with dozens of MFIs to promote social performance management, impact evaluation, and Credit with Education. This work has created a good base from which to develop the next level of social innovations, which is to bring together microfinance and health to develop practical and coordinated services and products that have more power to create lasting improvement in the economic and social welfare of MFI clients and their families.

During the first phase of the initiative with Oikocredit in Ecuador and Peru we have built on experience, staff capacity, tools and other resources developed by Freedom from Hunger as part of our Microfinance and Health Protection initiative to adapt and replicate the implementation of cohesive and sustainable packages of combinations of health education, health financing (such as health loans, health savings, and health microinsurance) and linkages to private and public health providers and products with the six MFI partners. Product packages are expected to be launched in early 2012 and benefits that will be tracked and documented will likely include client satisfaction, health knowledge, and health behaviors.

Scope of Work

1. Review background information and materials from program development activities to date as well as MAHP technical resources, other research reports, data collection instruments from other impact analyses; and background information on each of the MFI partners.
2. Organize and complete preliminary or baseline analysis of pre-intervention data collected from MFIs and clients. This may include data from health education mini-surveys, other client satisfaction data, and other data sources to be identified.
3. Work with MFI partners and Freedom from Hunger to assure the establishment of a reliable program monitoring system using indicators of program uptake and product performance developed by Freedom from Hunger.
4. Provide support for data collection, organization, and analysis from client surveys, focus groups and interviews to measure changes in health knowledge, health behaviors, and satisfaction, and with MFI staff to assess impact on staff work processes and satisfaction.

5. Participate, together with Freedom from Hunger staff, in the field assessment of the pilot programs.